



Tarawa Times

JANUARY 2010

Commander's Message

Families and Friends of Regimental Combat Team 2,

You've got the Executive Officer here...Lieutenant Colonel Steve Grass. I talked to many of you at the Advance Party (ADVON) married pre-deployment brief. The boss, Colonel Kennedy, is currently on his way back from Afghanistan after taking a look at our future Area of Operations (AO).

The last time Colonel Kennedy talked to you we did not have a deployment order, but since the President made his decision in November, we have been off to the races. We completed our last major exercise in December, and are well versed in the tactics, techniques and procedures we need to be successful. Right now, we are focused on mission specific training, individual preparations, gear readiness, medical and dental readiness, and family readiness. In fact, this afternoon, I am on my way out to the range to do some shooting and take a look at the training that your husbands and sons are participating in as we continue to hone our skills.

I know you are wondering what is in store for us, but because of operational security (OPSEC) concerns, I (and your Marines and Sailors) can't talk very specifically about what we'll be doing without endangering our success. However, in a general sense, we will be conducting COIN or counter-insurgency operations with the ultimate goal of fostering an effective Afghan government that can take responsibility for its own country. We will have several subordinate infantry battalions and will be working in conjunction with NATO and a number of agencies within the U.S. government. We will focus on several lines of operation; security and development of Afghan security forces predominantly, but will also focus on governance, rule of law and economic development.

For those of you that are unfamiliar with what we look like, the regimental headquarters company is organized into five primary functional sections; the S-1 or Personnel section, the S-2 or Intelligence section, the S-3 or Operations section, the S-4 or logistics section, and the S-6 or Communications section. Additionally, we have a Regimental Aid Station (medical) and a security platoon. All of these sections work to provide command and control, actionable intelligence, fire support coordination and combat service (logistics) support for our subordinate units. In short, we are a staff that provides our Commanding Officer the ability to fight as a regiment with his subordinate battalions.

Regarding the conditions we will face in Afghanistan, most of the regimental headquarters will be located on a single Forward Operating Base. We can expect to live in conditions varying from wooden buildings to tents. All of our living areas will be well protected by security forces and hard defensive protection. We will have a combination of hot meals and Meals Ready to Eat (MREs). Showers will be available, but it may not be every day. Your husbands will have some access to internet and, most definitely will have access to regular mail. If our mission sends us into new territory, the living conditions will become more spartan. Obviously, the temperatures will be cold when we first arrive, and will gradually turn very hot in the summer.

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Winds and windstorms will be expected, and those Marines out and about will have to contend with terrain varying from high mountains to open flat desert with mostly unpaved rudimentary roads. As the Marines that went before us, we are trained for all these conditions, and we will thrive.

The Boss looks forward to seeing plenty of you at our Married Pre-Deployment Brief on 21 January. Family participation and support is valuable to our deployed Marines. You are in good hands with Kimberly Hagner, our Family Readiness Officer. She has ensured that the right means of communication are in place to keep you informed and help you through the hardships of separation. Your well-being, and your letters (emails) and care packages will greatly impact the morale and combat readiness of our Marines and Sailors. We want you to be secure at home, and well informed, so that we can focus on the mission.

Regimental Combat Team 2 is the Tarawa regiment. It was forged on that island in the Pacific during World War II, and the regiment's heritage was forged by tough men who moved forward against a tenacious enemy. Our regimental slogan, "Keep Moving" was born during this fight, and it will be part of the foundation on which we build our resolve for Afghanistan. I know you are proud of your husbands and sons as they deploy to Operation Enduring Freedom. As many who have gone before them, I have no doubt that they will perform honorably. I ask that you "Keep Moving" at home.

For the Commanding Officer,
Lieutenant Colonel Steve Grass

Military One Source



www.militaryonesource.com

1-800-342-9647

Military One Source is a free online resource center offering support to military families, including parents, to help us better manage the challenges of our unique lifestyle. You name it, they've got the answer. No kidding! Try it for yourself.

- No question too small. No issue too big.
- All calls are immediately answered by a professional who can help.
- Translation services in more than 150 languages.

Free available resources include CD's, Playaways, paperback books, and much more on a variety of topics.

Relocation
Legal Issues
Education
Parenting and Child Care
Counseling Services (military ID holders only)

Deployment Issues
Financial Matters
Relationships
Health and Wellness
Local Children's Camps



**American
Red Cross**

Emergency Notification: How it works.

- An emergency happens in the family. (Family is defined by parent, spouse, child, sibling, legal guardian, and grandparent. Step and in-law relations included.)
- Family contacts the American Red Cross in their local area or calls 1-877-272-7337.
- The Red Cross obtains basic information on the emergency and the service member. Be sure to have the following information available: **name, rank, SSN or date of birth, branch of service, military address**
- The emergency is verified by the Red Cross.
- The message is sent to the service member and command via Red Cross Channels.
- **Message does not guarantee emergency leave. Leave is determined by the service member's chain of command.**

FRO Chat

Greetings Tarawa Family!

Welcome to the Unit Family Readiness Program! My name is Kimberly Hagner and I am the Family Readiness Officer (FRO) for 2d Marine Regiment. For many of you this is the first of many correspondences to come as I will continue to be your point of contact for updates regarding your Marine/sailor deployed with RCT-2 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Each month the 2d Marines Family Readiness Command Team will post routine updates and photos to our official unit website, broadcast command messages on our Family Readiness Hotline, and email information to help ease your mind and keep you informed.

First things first - many of you are looking for the deployment address of your Marine or sailor and we've finally received it. (see below) I have no doubt that you will start putting together your packages of goodies right away, maybe even sending them the day your Marine/sailor heads out of town to ensure they have something to open when they arrive. We recommend that packages be no larger than a shoe box, flat rate boxes from the United States Postal Service are perfect. Larger boxes are taking much longer to reach their intended recipient due to limits on space and priorities of moving essential items to our service members. You may consider ordering your packing materials in bulk from the U.S. Postal Service by calling 1-800-610-8734. Bulk orders will include a variety of flat rate boxes, customs forms, bubble wrap, and tape. To restock, just call the 800 number and give them your account number. It's that easy.

For those of you filing taxes on your service member's behalf, W2's are now available. Please touch base with your Marine/sailor to ensure you have all necessary documentation prior to their departure.

In closing I want you all to know that I am here to support you. The warriors of 2d Marines (the Tarawa Regiment) will better focus on the task at hand by knowing their family and friends back home are being informed about their well being. I welcome your feedback and inquiries and will do my absolute best to support your needs. Stand by for further information.

Deployment Address:
Rank, Service Member Name
RCT2
Unit 73910
FPO AE 09510-3910

Best regards,
Kimberly Hagner

Sergeant Major's Remarks

Marines, Sailors, and Families,

It brings a great pleasure and personal honor to be with the Marines and Sailors of Second Marine Regiment during such a crucial time in history as we prepare to deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. I have been with the Regiment only a few weeks and it became apparent quickly that the men are capable well trained professional war fighters. I served under the regiment only a few years ago with my previous unit and was amazed at the spirit and the can-do attitude then; and now more than ever as I am graced to hold the officer of Sergeant Major. The confidence and professionalism that I see in the men is superb and it is a source of pride to be associated with such fine citizens of this great nation of ours.

All can be confident that you're Marine and Sailor has the very best leadership, equipment, and the resources that will enable them to achieve success while deployed to Afghanistan. From individual amour to the latest in technology, the Regiment has all the tools not only to succeed but to excel.

For some of the wives and family members, this will be their first deployment, for others it will be another of many. The men of the Regiment and the Ladies of the home front share in the burdens of deployment, although different challenges.

Throughout history of our nation, men and women have shared the trials and tribulations of conflict. During the Revolutionary War, Margaret Corbin followed her husband to Fort Washington, New York. She, along with her husband, lived in the most miserable conditions that were prevalent in 1775. The one room, dirt floor, windowless house, with sod roof provided little protection from the elements. When her husband was killed, she took up arms until she was wounded by the British.

Wives and families continued to follow their husbands, often into harms way for the next 120 years. Families were normally not allowed to live on the post or garrison and often lived in tents or rudimentary structures outside the safety of the compound. With westward expansion, when the Army marched to a new location the pioneer wives marched alongside. In 1791, when General St. Clair ordered his troops to prepare for a 300-mile march to Ohio, 200 or more females, and some children accompanied the 1,700-man column. Many of the men and women died from disease, cold, and unsanitary conditions. Still, the majority made it to their new home in Ohio, only to leave four months later. Many of the conditions that families endured would not change drastically until the 20th century.

Marriage was discouraged in the military during the two World Wars. Many were deferred from the draft if married during WWI. Many that were married had headstrong wives that moved throughout the United States to be with their husbands. Marie Pope moved to Camp Custer, Michigan to be near her husband after their marriage in 1917. When she arrived females were not permitted on base, and she could not find housing. After several days a German family took her in for \$7.50 a week-her husband made \$30 a month! She did not see Harry for the first 30 days until he was given a 2 day pass and then once more for few days before he left for Europe. Still, she endured the hardship to be with her husband for only a few days before he left. Harry would not return, and years later, Marie never regretted those precious few days she spent with Harry. Many tales of similar hardship existed during WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.

The military did a very poor job of family readiness until the late 1970's and early 80's. The Military wife had remained hidden beneath the tradition of her military husband. As the proportion of the military became marriage centric (reaching 60 percent), the military learned those who were married, generally stayed in the military longer and performed better. When military families are strong and well adjusted, the service member tends to outperform service members with families that experience turmoil. Families are truly part of the success of our Marines and Sailors.

The resources that are currently in place are unmatched for the military family. Our 2nd Marine Regiment Family has many caring ladies that are more than willing to assist families in need. The Family Readiness Officer, Kimberly Hagner, is caring and concerned about the welfare our families and stands ready to assist anyone in need. No problem is to big or small her, she really enjoys helping families.

Assistance is available. I ask all to please communicate your needs before they become problems. Your Marine and Sailor will be thousands of miles away. The assistance that he can provide will be limited. I have a very personal reason for asking the families of 2nd Marine Regiment to be strong and assist each other -- your loved one needs to be focused at all times. If he is not, he can be in danger or endanger those around him.

I fully expect those of us that are about to enter into this deployment to experience difficulties. I use the word US to mean the Marine, Sailor, Wife, Children and Parents- because it is a team effort. The Marines and Sailors of the Regiment will experience hardships daily, living in austere environments, and facing the uncertainty of a counter-insurgency war. I fully expect the families of deployed Marines and Sailors to experience hardships during this deployment. Children will be born, anniversaries will be missed, cars will break down, and the list is perpetual. I have faith that members of the Regiment are prepared for this deployment, the commitment of military life, and the sacrifices that will be made. We will be stronger as a Regiment, and the family unit will grow stronger and mature as we go through this deployment together as one team.

Sincerely,
SgtMaj. G. W. Young

OPERATION HUG-A-HERO & Daddy Dolls

- Order Online at www.hugahero.com
- Cost: small (12" tall) \$21.95
large (17" tall) \$27.95
- Head to toe picture of service member needed.
- 1-3 weeks delivery



Operation Hug-a-Hero is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that offers Daddy Dolls to families of deployed service members in need.

To find out if you qualify or if you are interested in donating to this organization, simply log on to www.operationhugahero.org.

Chaplain's Corner: Deployment Lessons from Kindergarten

Robert Fulghum wrote a classic prose in short story format entitled, "*All I Ever Needed to Know, I Learned in Kindergarten.*" Since its publication, there have been many written renditions on the theme published to address a myriad of issues and challenges people face in life. I quote his words here to serve as a humorous backdrop for us to consider how we might choose to deal with friends, relatives, associates, neighbors and challenges we may face during our upcoming deployment. In other words, it's a lot more palatable to discuss the stressful and sensitive challenges of a deployment while observing them through the lenses of childlike humor. Robert Fulghum's story reads:

Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sand box at nursery school.

These are the things I learned. Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you are sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you. Live a balanced life. Learn some and think some and draw some and paint and sing and dance and play and work everyday.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out in the world, watch for traffic, hold hands, and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup? The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why. We are like that.

And then remember that book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK! Everything you need to know is there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation, ecology, and politics and the sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all, the whole world, had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put things back where we found them and clean up our own messes. And it is still true; no matter how old you are, when you go out in the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

As a 2D Marine Regiment unit and family, we are at the starting line of a deployment with all its experiences and challenges before us. Whether this is your first deployment or one of many, each of us will eventually accept the reality that we are going to be separated from our loved ones for the duration. That acceptance will bring with it a sense of courage and expectancy that we can do it and do it well with the support and care of our extended families and friends, as well as, our Regimental family who are taking this journey with us. We will become more self-sufficient and proficient at the task of taking care of ourselves and those who depend upon our support too. We will settle into routines filled with activities which reflect day-to-day life. We may at that juncture find ourselves more easily irritated with others around us whom we perceive just don't seem to understand what it's like to walk in our shoes (family separation, loneliness, sadness, and a host of other emotionally charged symptoms associated with a deployment). This is normal too, though it might not feel that way to us at times. It is a natural human phenomenon to want others to understand our point of view, and be compassionate with our thoughts and feelings. It's rare for others to possess the ability to do that 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in perfect order. Thus, it reflects the crux of our frustration when they don't respond in a way we'd like.

Here's the place where Robert Fulghum's simple children's tale serves us best. It reminds us to keep life simple in times of stress and crisis; to treat others as we "would like to be treated" (the golden rule); to express our fears, frustrations, and concerns in ways that solicit others to support our needs; to remain courteous in our dealings with others, even when they don't respond the way we'd like them to. We are encouraged here to smell the roses along the way of the deployment journey, developing an "attitude of gratitude" and maintaining our social graces – saying please and thank you. We are challenged to share our burdens with others around us, creating a spirit of "otherness" and remaining humble enough to allow our experiences to produce lasting growth in our lives.

Perhaps most of all, Robert Fulghum reminds us to learn to be kind to ourselves – giving ourselves a break when things don't go just the way we planned. He reminds us to look at life through the eyes of a child. In doing so, we will not forget to laugh, play, share, rest, relax, and enjoy life the way we first learned as children it was supposed to be. Like any journey, the road ahead has its twists and turns, highs and lows, bumps and potholes, and yes, moments of uncertainty. However, if we approach life through the eyes of a child in kindergarten who lives in the moment as Fulghum suggests, the journey might just turn out to be filled with a lifetime of memories, and lessons learned which produce personal growth, new friendships, and a renewed hope in the simple pleasures of life which can appear in the most unexpected ways on the playground of life. This deployment, like any journey, holds for us an opportunity to explore life from a unique perspective, one with the potential to shape our future in a way which prepares us for the rest of life.

I will be joining your Marines and Sailors on the journey to Afghanistan, and plan to send you monthly articles via this newsletter. In my absence, Chaplain Winston Shearin, the 8th Marine Regiment Chaplain has been assigned to provide Chaplain support for our Regimental family. He's a former enlisted Marine and a great pastor and confidant to Marines, Sailors and their families. You can reach him at the following numbers:

Office: (910) 450-8623 / 8662
Cell: (910) 333-4919

I look forward to taking this journey with you, and know that our prayers will be with you all the way! After all, you are the core reason we do our duty – taking care of our own.

Blessings and Semper Fidelis.
Chaplain Bill "Gunny" Appleton.



W2's are now
available on
MyPay.

Tax Time

- FREE E-Filing with Military One Source
www.militaryonesource.com
- FREE E-Filing at Base Tax Center
- -Bldg. 50 Lucy Brewer St.
-Mon-Fri 0800-2000 (walk-ins)
-Wed 0800-1600 (appointments available)
-Sat 0800-1200 (walk-ins)
-More Information: 451-0771
- Liberty Tax
-2 Locations: MCX & MCX Annex
-More Information: 451-7928 or 451-3449